

the VA to speed the implementation of this important legislation and show a change of culture at the VA. We all believe that veterans deserve the best possible care.

Carl McLaughlin, a 38-year-old Army veteran, committed suicide on December 19, 2013. He had been stationed in Bosnia, and he was released from the Army on a medical discharge in 2004.

Starting in 2006, Carl was treated at the Phoenix VA, but, as time went on, it became increasingly difficult for Carl to see his doctor. According to Carl's mother, Terry, at the time of his death, Carl was waiting to hear back from the Phoenix VA to have his medications adjusted and to see his doctor.

Carl suffered from recurring pain caused by shoulder injury, severe hearing loss, depression, and posttraumatic stress disorder. His depression worsened over time.

Terry, Carl's mom, told us:

The last time I saw Carl was a few days before his death. He looked really depressed, and I asked him if he had a doctor's appointment scheduled because I know he had been waiting over 4 weeks for a call back from the doctor's office. He said, no, he was still waiting.

He called them the next day, six times, and left three messages. He was put on hold and hung up on the other three times. This problem of calling and being hung up on and not getting calls back had been going on for over 1 to 2 years.

Terry asked us to share her son's story in the hope that his tragedy doesn't happen to another family.

Recently, I cosponsored legislation called the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act. This bill reviews mental health staffing requirements and increases the ability of the VA to recruit and train psychiatrists. Congress should pass this legislation this year to make it easy for veterans like Carl to see a behavioral health specialist.

Mr. Speaker and Members, I want to thank my colleagues who joined me this evening. Our thoughts are with the families who have lost a loved one. Each of us can do something to raise awareness, to be that light for a struggling veteran in our community.

Businesses can display signs to let veterans know that help is always available to them. Mental health professionals can volunteer with organizations like Give an Hour to provide free counseling to veterans, their family members, and active duty members and their families.

We can all learn to recognize the signs of crisis by visiting veteranscrisisline.net and then reaching out to the veterans in our lives.

Here in Congress, we can do more. We need a VA that provides real and meaningful help to veterans in need and that puts veterans first and works aggressively with community providers to improve the quality and accessibility of care. We need a VA that is transparent and open to restore the trust and credibility it has lost.

We who enjoy our freedom every day, thanks to the sacrifices of our military

servicemembers, must all step up to end the epidemic of veteran suicide.

I yield back the balance of my time.

LET'S END VETERAN SUICIDE

(Mr. GALLEGO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, few things we do here are more important than taking care of the men and women who have fought to protect our Nation. Doing something about the issue of suicide is incredibly important.

Not so very long ago, I had the opportunity to talk to a person that I had known for a very long time who I had met while serving in the legislature and who told me that his son, who was a veteran, had come back and was doing fine; yet, one day, he got the phone call that his son had committed suicide. No family should go through that.

Here in the Congress, we have an opportunity to do something about that. It is my hope that Congress, working in a bipartisan fashion, can work together to do something about this problem and to take better care across the board of the men and women who have fought every day, day in and day out, to serve our country.

ISLAMIC JIHAD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Mrs. BACHMANN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I expect that, shortly, a colleague will be here that I will hand off to for a few minutes to deal with several house-keeping issues, but, for the moment that I have, I want to focus on an issue that has gained the attention—as well it should—of the American people.

The number one duty of government, Mr. Speaker, is to secure the safety and the security of the American people. That is why we have a government. That is why we exist. It is the reason why countries enjoy sovereignty and declare themselves sovereign nations.

That means they are a separate political unit, and they exist for the purpose of preserving the safety and security of their people. That is our duty, and that is our government.

It seems, Mr. Speaker, throughout each generation that somehow, some way, there is a force that comes against a nation. In different eras, we have had different foes that the United States has had to contend with, beginning at our founding, when the United States of America, through our Declaration of Independence and through our Constitution, on this, our Constitution Day—and, by the way, we say happy Constitution Day to all Americans. We are very proud of our United States Constitution.

Contained within the Constitution is the admonition to the President, to the Congress, to the Supreme Court, again, to ensure that, in our founding document, we understand that it is the duty of the government to secure the safety and the security of the American people.

What led up to the writing of the Declaration of Independence and to the American Revolution and, ultimately, to America's founding document with the United States Constitution was a reaction of the colonists against a great totalitarian oppression that was coming against the United States. That was from the British motherland of which the United States was a colony of.

We pushed back against that oppression for many and sundry reasons, some of which were taxation, others were the taking away the rights of American citizens, whether it was forcing American citizens to take soldiers into their homes or taking away their rights as free men under the Magna Carta.

The American people rose up, and they said, "We want to have freedom." They threw off the chains of the totalitarianism of the day, the British Empire.

Going further into the future with the War of 1812, again, the United States was pushed into a conflict with the British, and, again, we had to throw off that enemy. Again, we saw our own house come apart in the time of the Civil War. There was also the Spanish-American War.

The United States was engaged in a great totalitarianism in 1917 with World War I and, again, in World War II. There was a conflict in the totalitarianism of our day. It was an evil known as Communism, both from the Soviet threat and also from Nazism.

The United States came together as a Nation. We threw off the yoke of the oppressor, of the totalitarianism of our day—in other words, a regime that had an idea that it wanted to conquer the world with its evil and immoral philosophy, whether it was Communism or whether it was Nazism.

It seems, Mr. Speaker, that every generation is confronted by a great evil, and the moral questions of the day are related to that evil. The evil, Mr. Speaker, that we are dealing with today is something known as Islamic jihad.

Its face is ugly. Its face has reared not only just in recent decades and just the last few months of this summer, but Islamic jihad is something that has been around as long as the inception of Islam itself.

The regime of jihad has been defeated, summarily, time and time again throughout history, but it was defeated through military might, it wasn't defeated through diplomacy, and defeated it was.

It was defeated at Tours; it was defeated at the battle of the gates of Vienna; it was defeated again with the

collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the 1920s; but it was defeated militarily. It was an idea that had grisly consequences. Those consequences were ones that led to bloodshed and suffering and misery for thousands of people across the world. Today is no different.

Today, we see the same level of bloodshed across the world. That bloodshed is coming to us, again, at the tip of the sword. This summer, it is known as the Islamic State. Some people know it as ISIS. Some people know it by the name ISIL. The President uses the term "ISIL."

This organization is just a continuation of al Qaeda—and a continuation of something even greater than al Qaeda—and that is the concept known as Islamic jihad.

Baghdadi, the head of the Islamic State, initially called them ISIS, which means the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham, or Syria.

□ 1815

That was the territory that Baghdadi was seeking to conquer. He did, in fact, conquer much of that territory.

Then he changed the name of his organization to ISIL, the Islamic State in the Levant. The Levant is a geographical area that is greater than Syria and Iraq. It would comprise much of eastern Turkey, Israel, Gaza, Lebanon, and so forth, the greater area, if you will, of the central Mediterranean area.

After that, the Islamic State issued yet another press release with yet another name change. And in the course of that name change, the Islamic State decided to drop the IS and the IL, and now they are known simply as the Islamic State.

That is because the ambitions, Mr. Speaker, of Baghdadi and the Islamic State are far grander than just Iraq or just Syria or just eastern Turkey or Israel or Lebanon or Jordan or Gaza—far bigger.

The Islamic State, you see, Mr. Speaker, encompasses the entire globe, the planet Earth. Every part of this Earth, you see, Mr. Speaker, is what is intended. It is the ultimate in totalitarianism—what the Communists planned for, which was for control of the world under the umbrella of communism, and saw themselves ultimately defeated militarily; and again, what the Nazis saw, Mr. Speaker, as control of the world, national socialism through the Nazi Party movement and, ultimately, were defeated militarily.

So too, Mr. Speaker, the Islamic State sees their evil, violent, cruel, bloody philosophy also would encompass the Earth. That would include the United States of America. That would include, obviously, our great ally Israel. It would encompass all of North America. It would also cover the Asian nations. The entire world now, Mr. Speaker, is at threat from this totalitarianism.

And often it is said, never despise small beginnings. It is breathtaking,

Mr. Speaker, what we have seen accomplished by the Islamic State. The leader, again, is a man named Baghdadi.

Baghdadi was a part of the franchise known as al Qaeda in Iraq. Al Qaeda began—we know about Osama bin Laden. Well, an affiliate of Osama bin Laden was the man named Baghdadi, who is the current head of the Islamic State.

Baghdadi, when he was a part of the franchise, al Qaeda in Iraq, was number three. We were able to target and kill number one and number two in the power structure in Iraq. That left Baghdadi as the next in command.

Baghdadi decided not only did he want to be the leader of al Qaeda in Iraq, he wanted so much more. But, you see, Baghdadi was waylaid for a period of time in his life. Why? Because Baghdadi was captured by the United States. He was found to be a terrorist. He was held in detention in Camp Baka in Iraq.

So we had him, the leader of the Islamic State, the organization responsible for the beheadings of Americans, the American photojournalist James Foley and the American photojournalist James Sotloff and, this Saturday, the beheading of another British journalist. Baghdadi is responsible for all of that and so much more.

Baghdadi was responsible for ordering the murdering of literally hundreds and thousands of individuals in Iraq. We saw Baghdadi line up hundreds of soldiers in Iraq, Iraqi soldiers, and they were brutally and mercilessly murdered, being shot in the back.

We also saw additional beheadings occur, and we saw also as they chased the Yazidis up Mount Sinjar. We also heard the horrific tales of how the merciless Islamic State literally stooped so low that they buried alive women and children in graves in August.

Mr. Speaker, I despise being as graphic as I am, but we must be face-to-face with the facts that we are facing. This is an evil regime. It is an evil philosophy with an evil goal. They are as equally committed to killing Jews as they are committed to killing Christians as they are committed to killing any Muslim who doesn't agree with their sick, failed philosophy.

The other thing we need to recognize, Mr. Speaker, is that this has a religious motivation, not because I say so, but because Baghdadi and the terrorists of the Islamic State say so. Their motivation is their religion. They say it is Islam that drives them to do what they are doing.

That is why it is perplexing, Mr. Speaker, that a week ago the President of the United States said in a televised address that Islam has nothing to do with the Islamic State. He said there are two fallacies of the Islamic State. Number one, he said, it is not Islam.

Well, Mr. President, you may not think it is Islam, but ask the leaders of Islamic jihad what they think it is. They say forthrightly and boldly, with everything that is within them, that

their motivation for beheading individuals, for burying women and children alive, for establishing a global power to enforce their sick, religious ideas upon the world is based upon their religion of Islam.

That is their reasoning, Mr. Speaker, out of their mouths. And I believe that it is prudent and wise to listen to the enemy, to find out what their motivations are.

We look no further than the mad, evil, maniacal leader of the Nazi Party, as he was rising in the 1930s, when he wrote his book called "Mein Kampf." In his book, "Mein Kampf," he wrote his detailed plan. You see, he wasn't being secret, Mr. Speaker, about the evil that he wanted to bring against the Jewish people. He was very forthright. The same can be said, Mr. Speaker, of Baghdadi, who is the head of the evil regime and ideology known as the Islamic State. Baghdadi.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, this is what the leader of the Islamic State had to say. This is in January, and he said this to the United States, and I quote. In a speech in January of this year, Baghdadi said to the United States: "Soon we will be in direct confrontation. So watch out for us for we are with you, watching."

I repeat: "Soon we will be in direct confrontation," meaning with the United States. "So watch out for us for we are with you, watching."

That tells me, Mr. Speaker, that Baghdadi and the Islamic State don't intend to confine their bloodletting just in Iraq and Syria or in Jordan or Lebanon. Their designs are for the United States as well.

We have been told and we have read that there is an enormous amount of so-called chatter through the social media by members of the Islamic State and those who promote Islamic jihad to enter into the United States and to bring about atrocities here within the confines of our American sovereign soil.

You see, our sovereign soil has been invaded. Our sovereign soil was invaded at Benghazi. Our U.S. consulate in Benghazi when Ambassador Chris Stevens lost his life was U.S. soil. Islamic jihadists entered our sovereign soil and killed our U.S. Ambassador on that sovereign soil.

Just within a month or so ago, Islamic jihadists again took over the airport in Baghdad, and again we saw an embassy in Libya, in Tripoli, abandoned. So United States personnel were forced to flee the United States Embassy in Tripoli and leave and gain escape through Tunisia.

It is really quite sobering when you think of the advances of Islamic jihad in the region. And that is why I don't understand, Mr. Speaker, I don't understand the thinking of the President when it is coming against this evil. I don't understand it because, you see, the Islamic State has not only declared their intention, they have declared that they are at war with the United

States. They have declared they are at war. They have declared that they are a caliphate. They are a government. They are an Islamic government.

They have a leader in Baghdadi. They have already conquered territory, about half of Iraq, about half of Syria, which they control, also other parts of the Middle East as well. They also control parts of northern Lebanon.

They have made absolutely breathtaking strides in their short tenure of advancement. So they have land. They have a name. They have a leader. They have a government. It is known as shari'a law. That is Islamic law. That is their law of the land.

They also have an administration. They have a Shura Council, and they have an administration. They already have a line of hierarchy and an organizational flowchart of how they are going to run the Islamic State.

They have an army. Twelve thousand, presumably, are in the Islamic State Army, and brutal they are—beheadings, women raped, men beheaded, innocent children shot in the head. It is absolutely devastating.

We see Christians have been chased out of the Middle East region. The numbers are so dramatic, Mr. Speaker, of Christians that have had to flee Iraq, Christians in Mosul that have lived safely there. The ancient town of Nineveh, which Jonah went to preach in Nineveh, and that town is Mosul, Christians have been in Mosul since the time of Christ, 2,000 years. Mosul no longer has Christians. They were chased out of that city.

The Christians have been chased repeatedly out of Iraq. They are being chased out of the Baghdad area. They have been chased certainly out of northern Iraq and western Iraq, as Jews were chased out long ago.

Now, in Syria, we hear the horrific stories of Christians who have been killed and murdered and beheaded simply because they name the name of Jesus Christ. Jews have been slaughtered and beheaded simply because they name the name of their God.

Is there any greater intolerance, Mr. Speaker than the intolerance that has been shown repeatedly, brutally, lethally, by the Islamic State against Jews and Christians, and, yes, Muslims whom they disagree with.

It is a very sobering time. And so, quite rightly, our President, a week ago in his remarks, called upon the Congress to help him do something. The President gave his strategy. I listened with open ears to the President's strategy, and it was very curious to me because the President of the United States developed a strategy that consists of items that the United States is already doing. There was nothing new here.

The President called for an increase of 475 advisers to go into Iraq. The President said there wouldn't be any boots on the ground, of soldiers' boots.

He did not say that we are at war. Even though the Islamic State has de-

clared war against the United States, the President did not say that the United States was going to war.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, something like 7 weeks ago, in the midst of the rise of the Islamic State in Iraq, with the horrific, breathtaking advances and murders, the President of the United States said that he wanted the Congress to withdraw the AUMF, which is the authorization of military force for the United States to be in Iraq.

It was really an unthinkable, bizarre request that this Congress received from the President. Would you please withdraw, the President said, my ability to be able to bring about military force in Iraq?

From my perspective, either the President and his advisers were incredibly shortsighted about this breathtaking rise of the Islamic State which, by the way, didn't just occur in the last 3 or 4 months. I am privileged to serve on the Intelligence Committee in the House of Representatives. We have watched, Mr. Speaker, literally, for the last several years, the rise of the Islamic State. We saw this coming.

That information presumably was available to the President of the United States as well. He knew they were on the rise. There has always been the Islamic jihad in the Middle East, but it has been at a different tempo. It has been on the rise.

Baghdadi, who is in his early to mid-forties, who is a very well-educated man with a doctorate degree, who literally has decades of veteran senior-level experience in al Qaeda, declaring war against the United States, literally, for decades, put himself in the position of being the top man at the very top of the hierarchy, the top of the line of the chain of command of the Islamic State.

□ 1830

Baghdadi knew what he needed to have. He needed to be financially self-sustaining. To do that, he ordered the robbing of banks, particularly beginning in northern Iraq. Some reports estimate that the Islamic State had stolen as much as over \$400 million. We don't know the exact amount, but we do know that Baghdadi was determined, and he intended to advance. He knew he couldn't feed an army unless he had money to do so, and so he robbed it from the banks to begin his army.

Then he began to build that army by opening up prison doors and having prison breaks and bringing terrorists who had been jailed out of the prisons to join his band. So he had an army of terrorists, and he trained them even further, and he paid them with money that he stole from banks.

Then Baghdadi did something very strategic. He decided to steal oil fields, and he stole those oil fields in northern Iraq, very productive oil fields. One estimate says that one of the oil fields is worth about 10 billion barrels of oil. Whether or not that is true, that is one

of the accounts that I have read. If that is true, it would be equal to about the value of the Bakken oil field, which has proven to be extremely productive and very lucrative in North Dakota here in the United States. Baghdadi is selling oil on the black market today to finance his terrorism, oil fields that he stole from northern Iraq and in the Kurdistan area.

He didn't stop there. He knew, to be viable, he also had to have refined energy products. So what did he do?

Baghdadi then stole and secured an oil refinery so that he could have oil products in order to have energy to run his army and also to be able to provide for the people under his protectorate. A "protectorate" is a very generous way of saying "dictatorship" in his caliphate. You see, he is the head guy. He is the caliph in his new self-described Islamic State, the caliphate.

You see, Mr. Speaker, he figured out how to finance himself. He took over electrical grids in Iraq and in Syria so that he could be the one who supplies the electricity to the people so that the people would be beholden to him. He put his people in charge of roads and supply lines. Baghdadi also took over a gas field in central Syria. That gas field also could be used to sell the gas for productivity or to deny that gas to Assad or to anyone he considered his enemy. You see, Baghdadi was strategic.

In August, I had the ability and the privilege to go over and visit both Turkey and Jordan and to meet with leadership there on the issue of ISIS, and, while I was there, it was stunning. There was a public display in Jordan of well over 15,000 who were protesting against Israel and in favor of the Muslim Brotherhood and the foreign terrorist-designated organization known as Hamas. There was also a reported demonstration of 7,000 Jordanians who were protesting in favor of the Islamic State. So there is pressure on Jordan—pressure within and pressure from without.

The Islamic State now controls checkpoints, so much so that there is, effectively, no longer a border between Iraq and Syria. That has been erased. Now Iraq and Syria have been joined to one another under the control and the authority of the Islamic State. They control checkpoints not only on Lebanon but also Israel.

It was horrifying to read that the Islamic State had joined up with the Free Syrian Army, the army that the United States has been involved with in the so-called "vetting" of moderates and in the training and equipping to fight against the Islamic State.

The Free Syrian Army reports say they had actually joined up with other Islamic jihadists, known as the Jabhat al-Nusra Front, and they took over the checkpoint that controls the area of the Golan Heights leading into Israel. There were upwards of 20 to 40 different U.N. peacekeepers at that checkpoint, and that checkpoint was taken over 200

yards from Israel, as if Israel didn't have enough to deal with in the terrorist organization known as Hezbollah, which is an Iranian proxy on her north, and from Russian influence as well coming through Hezbollah. Israel has had to suffer with indignities from Assad, from Syria, as well as from the Muslim Brotherhood franchise known as Hamas in Gaza.

It has been an extremely difficult summer. I met with refugees while I was in the Middle East region, people who were just peaceful, freedom-loving people just wanting to live their lives and raise their families and love people and worship their god. They were uprooted over this summer and late spring by Islamic jihad, both in Iraq. As for one woman I spoke to, she and her family were uprooted from their home in Iraq. They had to flee their home and abandon everything they owned and flee to Syria. Once they were in Syria, there was a rise of the Islamic jihad in Syria. They had to flee Syria and make their way to Turkey. When I spoke with her, she was on the southern border of Turkey, and she was hoping that she would have the ability, with her family, to move to the United States of America. She was going to go for yet one more final interview at the end of September, and she was hoping that her family would have that chance to come and live in freedom.

That is our wish, Mr. Speaker, for all men. We want all men to have the dignity of living in peace. It is why we honor the American Constitution today on Constitution Day. You see, this Constitution and this country mean something for the rest of the world. We think that the norms and the peacefulness that we enjoy and the prosperity that you see here in the United States must be somewhat normative across the world. We think, well, we have it, really, probably the best, but sometimes we don't recognize, really, how great we do have it. It isn't by accident—it is by design—and it came at a great cost and at a great sacrifice because our Founders recognized these ideals:

Number one, that all men are created equal and that we are endowed by our Creator with certain unalienable rights, rights that aren't given by government, rights that are only given by God: the right to life, to our liberty—our freedom—and to the pursuit of happiness, which means we have the privilege to work, and, once we work, we get to keep the fruit of our own labors.

What a brilliant concept. Where across the world do people have the right to life? Certainly not in Iraq today. Certainly not in Syria today. They don't enjoy the unfettered access to their right to life, because their life is imperiled by the Islamic State, which says to them: Under pain of death, you convert to Islam, or we kill you. You convert to Islam, or you pay us a tax. You convert to Islam, or you have to abandon everything you know and get as far away from us as you pos-

sibly can in the short term because we are coming after you in the long term.

Is that life? That is no life at all. But here in the United States, our Founders wisely understood that all of humanity's happiness springs from the right to life.

Number two, liberty, freedom. That is the hallmark and the emblem of the United States of America. If there is any ideal and any value, Mr. Speaker, that our Constitution champions it is this: it is liberty—freedom—from an oppressive government that would force its will on an individual human's life, because the Holy Scriptures teach that life is precious. We are but a flower that quickly fades. We are but a puff of smoke, the Old Testament teaches in the Proverbs. Therefore, this life that God has given to us, that He has breathed into every human being, as He created every human being in His image and His likeness, this is it. This is no dress rehearsal. This is the main event.

Our Founders wisely understood that it is for freedom that we have been set free so that we can then aspire to do whatever it is that we choose to do, the way that we take our finger and write the poetry of each of our lives.

Then, in the Declaration of Independence, our Founders rightly said, through the pen of Thomas Jefferson's, that we are also endowed by our Creator—again, not by a government, not by any government. Only a God who created us, gave us the unalienable right to pursue happiness, which means we can pursue whatever employment, whatever labor that we so desire, and then we have the right, the unfettered right, to keep the fruit of our labor—to build a home, to marry, to start a family, to be able to go out and further and help our community. Oh, what a Nation we have today, Mr. Speaker, the economic powerhouse of the world, the military engine of the world. This is such a great and wonderful gift that was given to us.

That is why it is right and fitting and proper for us to honor and recognize this Constitution Day. I am so grateful and so honored and privileged that we can do exactly that and honor that day. That is why we have to stand for this liberty, something that people in other countries cannot do.

We must therefore observe, and it is why we have to make sure, when there is a great totalitarianism like the Islamic State, which has declared war against the United States, we have a decision to make. Anyone can declare war on you. It is another thing to bring about warlike acts against you in an attempt to defeat you. That is exactly what the Islamic State has done. That is exactly what they have stated their intention is. I believe, if there is anything, Mr. Speaker, that history has taught us it is this: when a madman speaks, we should listen. Baghdadi, most certainly, is rational from his point of view, but his ideas are mad, and, even further, they are immoral

and they are evil to deprive life, liberty, and happiness to people.

If I could just pause and ask the Speaker if there is a time limitation that we are looking at. How much time remains?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Minnesota has 27 minutes remaining.

Mrs. BACHMANN. I appreciate that update.

Mr. Speaker, we look at the threats that the United States is looking at from the Islamic State: the fact that they have declared war against the United States; the fact that they have already killed intentionally, in a cruel and barbaric manner, American citizens; the fact that they are recruiting American citizens to come and join them in their evil deed; the fact that American citizens have left the Islamic State as terrorists under the creed of the Islamic State. Their creed says that those who join the Islamic State abandon any allegiance to any other government, including the American Government. They then become part of the Islamic State, and their duty and allegiance is to the Islamic State. Once they leave the Islamic State and return to the United States, then they have the ability to come in and be terrorists in the United States. This is nonsensical to me.

You see, Mr. Speaker, earlier this summer, I asked the FBI for a classified briefing. I did so because my home State of Minnesota has a tragic, very unfortunate, nexus to terrorism. We have the distinction of having the only convicted terrorist of 9/11 being from the State of Minnesota. His name is Moussaoui.

We also have a high number of Minnesotans who left Minnesota and abandoned the United States to go and fight on behalf of another al Qaeda organization, known as al-Shabaab. That is an al Qaeda affiliate in Somalia. Well over 50 Minnesotans traveled to join al-Shabaab and fight in the cause of Islamic jihad.

We also had terrorist financing cases, which were successfully prosecuted in Minnesota. Two women were convicted of terrorist financing cases in the Minneapolis Federal district court. Two women were convicted of terrorist financing in Rochester, Minnesota, in Federal district court.

Then we had the Westgate shopping mall terror act in Kenya, and from the terrorists who were involved and claimed sponsorship of this horrific act of the shooting at the Westgate mall in Kenya, the report was that two Minnesotans were a part of that effort. Then we saw, although it hasn't been confirmed by our government, that the terrorists have named two Minnesotans.

Then we saw that very sophisticated recruitment videos were put forth to recruit individuals to come and join al Qaeda. When this occurred, three of them were featured from Minnesota. They were called the "Minnesota martyrs," three young men. One was a

Caucasian American. His name was Troy Kastigar. He had been converted to Islam at a mosque called the Al Farooq mosque in Bloomington, Minnesota, where many of the individuals who have gone to fight on behalf of the Islamic State made their religious home.

Troy Kastigar said that he was honored to be a traitor to America. That was a part of his conviction to the Islamic State. He turned on his country; so, when I asked the FBI earlier this summer—and then, of course we have had, according to the FBI, at minimum, another 20 Minnesotans who have left Minnesota to join the Islamic State, including the first two Americans who were killed fighting on behalf of the Islamic State, both of whom were from the State of Minnesota.

Just as recently as several weeks ago, three young Somali American girls left Minnesota, abandoned their families, and joined the Islamic State. We have a very unfortunate nexus.

It is with that background, Mr. Speaker, that I asked the FBI if I could come in and sit with them and if they would answer my questions in a classified setting.

I wanted to know, number one, had Minnesotans left the United States and joined to fight with the Islamic State. Unfortunately, I was told there were two. It was classified information at the beginning of the summer. Now, tragically, it has been reported worldwide that the very first two Americans were Minnesotans who were fighting for the Islamic State.

I asked the question: If these terrorists choose not to blow themselves up as suicide bombers, or if they are not killed fighting on behalf of the Islamic State, and they choose to fly back to the United States or gain entry to the United States legally through some other means with a U.S.-held passport, would they be given entry into the United States?

Mr. Speaker, I have to tell you, I was completely floored when the FBI said to me, "Well, yes, of course, these terrorists would be allowed to come into the United States."

I asked, "Why? And how?" They told me, "We track them, and we put their names on a watch list." It isn't perfect, but the FBI puts the names of Americans on a watch list. I asked, "What happens when they are on a watch list?"

I was told that the Americans with a U.S. passport, who have relinquished U.S. citizenship and have joined the Islamic State, have become terrorists and fought on behalf of the Islamic State then were returning to the United States, would be asked additional questions at screening at an airport before they come into the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I am asked additional questions, sometimes, at the airport. How could this be possible?

I was told by the FBI that the terrorists then would be given entry, and

they would be allowed to go, unmolested, to return to their life here in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I submit that is pure madness for us to do that. If there was one thing we should do, it is follow our Constitution, follow the way of all nations, which is to secure the safety and security and sovereignty of that Nation.

To do that, Mr. Speaker, we must take the passports of anyone who has joined up with the Islamic State and do everything that we can to prevent terrorists from reentering the United States.

These terrorists would have had battlefield experience, they would have had established relationships with a terror network, and they potentially may have a plan for terrorist activity in the United States. That should and must be done.

What we also must do—and I agree with the President of the United States—we must defeat this enemy. The Islamic State has declared war against the United States. I believe that we must declare war against the Islamic State, but that is not what President Obama proposed.

You see, President Obama, from his rhetoric, has essentially made clear that he believes that war is obsolete in the 21st century, but that isn't the view of the Islamic State. That isn't the view of the totalitarian regime that has declared war against the United States. War isn't obsolete for their mind; yet the President of the United States is not choosing to engage the United States in war.

It is this odd hybrid where the President wants to say that he is going to try to defeat the Islamic State; yet he is not willing to do what it takes to defeat the Islamic State.

Why do I say that? Because the United States military is the greatest military—Army, Navy, and Air Force—in the world. There is nothing that can even remotely compare to the United States military; yet our President stated—both last week in his address to the Nation, as well as today at MacDill Air Force Base in his remarks—that there will be no U.S. boots on the ground. There will not be a U.S. military presence.

He is willing to use the American Air Force to fly missions and have airstrikes, but not boots on the ground.

You see, it doesn't work that way, Mr. Speaker. A military is a cohesive unit, and this is going up 50,000 feet, we have to understand: Do we have a problem? Yes, we have a problem.

Americans are being killed and beheaded by the Islamic jihadist state. They have declared war against the United States. They are using all possible means to advance themselves to their goal.

They are gaining in strength every day—huge swaths of economic territory, huge swaths of geographic territory. They are increasing the size of their armies. They are making threats against the United States.

What is our response? The President of the United States, number one, is unwilling to declare war against this enemy. He is unwilling to use our United States military to defeat this enemy.

He has asked partners across the world—whether it is Muslim, Arab nations, whether it is our traditional allies—to join him. He received some rhetoric, some nods of the head, that some allies would help him; yet there isn't one word that one country is actually going to supply troops or supply armament or supply training.

We don't know what it is that the President has put together; yet, somehow, some way, he believes that this enemy is going to be defeated. His plan is what he was doing before. It was some advisers in an Embassy in Baghdad, U.S. advisers, but not boots on the ground.

His other avenue of defeat is to have United States tax dollars vet Syrians and, supposedly, Iraqis and train them to be a part of a military effort and give them American armament after 3 and a half weeks of arming.

You see, I really don't understand this methodology, when we already have the best military in the world and the President has decided to put the best option that we have on the sidelines and then he wants to create an ad hoc army on the ground with, at best, thin loyalties to our ultimate objective.

How thin, Mr. Speaker? Well, the RAND Corporation took a look at those who were trained, vetted, and on the ground and fighting in the Free Syrian Army, and the RAND Corporation found that about half—50 percent of those that the United States had vetted, the so-called moderates trained and given American armaments to—about half had been not only sympathetic but had cooperated and joined up with the enemy, the Islamic State and the al-Nusra front.

Well, if, in fact, the RAND Corporation is accurate and we have lost about 50 percent of those that we trained, I would say we don't have a very good success ratio.

As a matter of fact, what I would say is that the Islamic State has an incredible success ratio because we will have—at taxpayer expense—identified, vetted, trained, and armed a whole new level of army for the Islamic State, the enemy.

Who is this working for? Not us. Who is this defeating? Not them. Because the Islamic State continues to grow and we are paying for part of their military training and armaments.

In fact, this same story that came out last week said that the Islamic State had raided our United States weapons depots that we had set up for arming the Free Syrian Army.

What does the President want us to do? The President wanted the United States Congress to get behind his effort to increase the amount of training and arming of the Islamic State.

You see, these moderates have been more than a mirage, more than a charade for quite a bit of time. As a matter of fact, one of my colleagues from Minnesota gave me an article today before we took the vote.

Again, I am not trouncing anyone's vote in this chamber. I want to make it very clear. Both sides of the aisle—Republican and Democrat, individual Members of Congress—wrestled with their vote. Everyone struggled with what to do. Should we back the President in what he is choosing to do? Should we not back the President?

I give all goodwill to every Member of Congress. I castigate no one for the vote that they cast today because this was truly a vote of conscience that every Member made, and every Member needs to speak for themselves.

I only speak for myself tonight, Mr. Speaker, but this came out yesterday. The leader of the Free Syrian Army, the army that the President wants us to spend \$500 million to train even more individuals, under this commander, this is what the article says: "The Free Syrian Army announced they will not sign up to the U.S.-led coalition to destroy the Islamic State militants in Iraq and Syria."

I just want to repeat that again.

"The Free Syrian Army announced it will not sign up to the U.S.-led coalition to destroy ISIS in Iraq and Syria. The group's founder, Colonel Riad al-Asaad, stressed that toppling Syrian President Bashar al-Assad is their priority and that they will not join forces that U.S.-led efforts without a guarantee that the United States is committed to his overthrow."

"If they want to see the Free Syrian Army on their side"—our side—"they should give assurances on toppling the Assad regime and on a plan including revolutionary principles."

This is the army that we are entrusting to win this effort against ISIS, and this army is more interested in toppling Assad. They are not interested in toppling ISIS.

"The announcement appears to be reversing an earlier statement on Thursday by the National Coalition opposition, the Free Syrian Army's political wing, which said it was ready to work with the coalition against IS."

The political arm said yes, but the guys who are actually going to have the boots on the ground say, "No, we are not going to be there. We are not going to be fighting IS."

"Saying they had 'long called for this action,' the coalition called on U.S. politicians to authorize the training and equipping of the Free Syrian Army 'as soon as possible.'"

This is from the Middle East Eye. This is in an article that came out yesterday.

At best, we have got a very, very weak case—a very weak case. There are articles, which I agree with, that put the choice before us. It says: Do we have an enemy? Yes. What do we need to do? Defeat the enemy. I get that,

but we have been unwilling to declare a war against this enemy. We have been unwilling to put the United States' military against this enemy.

What the President of the United States wants the United States to do is train some Syrians for 3 and a half weeks. We have already spent how many billion training the Iraqis, and the Iraqi Army could not stand up against the Islamic State army.

We had trained them for a very extensive period of time, with the finest training that we possibly could. They were well-equipped. Because United States residual forces were pulled by the President of the United States, the Iraqi Army could not stand up against the Islamic State, and they ran.

We think that 3 and a half weeks of training is going to do the job of the Syrians? I don't think so.

I think what the President of the United States asked us to do, Mr. Speaker, is to be a scapegoat in his failed strategy. He wants to be able to point to the Congress and say, "The Congress gave me the authority to do it."

I don't want to do that. I didn't do that today. I chose to vote "no." I am not being self-righteous when I say that.

My thinking on this is that I am willing to vote for a World War II strategy, meaning I am all in. I believe that we need to declare war against this evil empire of the Islamic State. We need to put all resources with the full plan, with an exit strategy in fully defeating the Islamic State, which we can. They are an army of 12,000.

This can be done, but I won't agree to a Vietnam war style strategy which is exactly, in my opinion, what President Obama chooses—chose to engage, with dribs and drabs, increasing a little here, increasing a little there.

□ 1900

The President, in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, would have been well-served if he also would have demonstrated even more humbleness regarding our strategy—meaning, for the President to be absolutely adamant last night, as well as today, for Secretary of State Kerry to be absolutely adamant today that there will be no U.S. boots on the ground sends a signal. It sends a signal that we are not serious about defeating this evil known as the Islamic State, which we must be.

I ask the question, Mr. Speaker: Who on the ground will be calling for the airstrikes against the Islamic State? Someone on the ground needs to do it. That is how war works. Someone who is on the ground needs to call for those airstrikes.

You cannot win a war when you only have overhead architecture and overhead surveillance. You need people on the ground who can go and gather the intelligence that you need so you know, effectively, how to defeat this enemy.

I ask this: Do we want to defeat this enemy decisively, quickly, and com-

pletely so that this enemy understands that, if they ever rear their head again, they had better think twice because we are going to so decimate their evil plan? Are we going to do that? Or are we going to do what happened in Vietnam, drib, drab, a little here, a little there, never quite getting up what it takes to actually defeat that enemy?

What happened in the end in Vietnam? Ultimately, the Communists came in, and that country fell. It was a very sad conclusion because, you see, the postscript to the story of Vietnam was the slaughter of innocents under the evil Pol Pot and the killing fields, and we know the history was an ugly history.

This isn't good, this is awful, but we need to see what has happened. You see, this Arab Spring has been nothing but Islamic bloodletting across the Middle East. In their own words, it is religious-based. In their own words, it is religious, shari'a inspired. In their own words, they are doing the bidding of their god to spill the blood of the infidel. This is an evil, this is a moral wrong, and this must be defeated.

The good news is it can be. We can defeat it. When we are the greatest military powerhouse in the world, when we have the capability to defeat this enemy, I don't understand it. I don't understand, Mr. Speaker, our President who just this week said that he needed to commit 3,000 American troops to the African continent for Ebola—to defeat Ebola.

Now, Ebola is a virus that has a health impact against the American people. I can understand dispatching medical personnel. I can understand dispatching people for humanitarian purposes, but the very weird thing about the President's strategy is it has been changing our military so that its purpose is to bring about humanitarian relief in the form of dispatching them for boots on the ground to deal with Ebola. That is not the purpose of a military.

The President needs to dispatch 3,000 troops—or whatever it takes—into the Islamic State to defeat the Islamic State. We don't go in willy-nilly. We go in with a very good plan, with the most brilliant military minds—and we have them—with the bravest military heroes—and we have them—and with the greatest military equipment that has ever been devised by man, and we have it. We have got it all. We have got the means for defeating this evil enemy.

To not do it, Mr. Speaker, in my mind, that is a moral wrong. That is an evil. To allow that evil to grow, thrive, and continue to slit the throats of men, women, and children; to rob them of their lives; and, yes, to see tragedy borne potentially across this land because, even today, as we are in this Chamber tonight, absolutely nothing has been done to secure America's southern border, absolutely nothing against entry by the Islamic State into

this country, despite the fact that the Islamic State, through their social media, has been declaring their intent to do exactly that.

Why in the world aren't we closing our southern border and every other border and every other port of entry? Why aren't we pulling the passports of Americans who have become terrorists under the Islamic State and who seek to return to the United States?

Why would any sane country choose to take effective, commonsense answers to secure the safety of the American people? That is what a nation that wants to survive would do. That is the better way. That is what I hope the President of the United States will do because, you see, everything is at stake

On this, our Constitution Day, let us recognize the first duty of any nation, especially the greatest Nation, is to secure the safety, sovereignty, and security of the American people. That, we must do, and I am so proud that we have the means to do it.

I believe that we will acquire the judgment to do what needs to be done. It is within the hearts of the American people. It is within our military. Now, it is up to the politicians. Listen to wisdom. Listen to the people, and do what needs to be done.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 1214. An act to require the purchase of domestically made flags of the United States of America for use by the Federal Government; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

BILLS PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on September 17, 2014, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bills:

H.R. 4197. To amend title 5, United States Code, to extend the period of certain authority with respect to judicial review of Merit Systems Protection Board decisions relating to whistleblowers, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5134. To extend the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity and the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance for one year.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 6 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, September 18, 2014, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

7185. A letter from the Program Manager, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Guidelines for Designating Biobased Products for Federal Procurement (RIN: 0599-AA18) received August 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

7186. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Beef Promotion and Research; Reapportionment [No.: AMS-LPS-13-0079] received September 2, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

7187. A letter from the Director, Office of Management and Budget, transmitting a notification of the President's intent to exempt all military personnel accounts from any discretionary cap sequester in FY 2015, if a sequester is necessary; to the Committee on Appropriations.

7188. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter authorizing Brigadier General Lawrence M. Martin, Jr., United States Air Force, to wear the insignia of the grade of major general; to the Committee on Armed Services.

7189. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the semi-annual status report of the U.S. Chemical Demilitarization Program for August 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

7190. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Burton M. Field, United States Air Force, and his advancement on the retired list to the grade of lieutenant general; to the Committee on Armed Services.

7191. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter authorizing Brigadier General Mark A. Brown, United States Air Force, to wear the insignia of the grade of major general; to the Committee on Armed Services.

7192. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the fiscal year 2013 report entitled, "Operation and Financial Support of Military Museums"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

7193. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Peter M. Vangjel, United States Army, and his advancement on the retired list in the grade of lieutenant general; to the Committee on Armed Services.

7194. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a report on transactions involving U.S. exports to Mexico pursuant to Section 2(b)(3) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945, as amended; to the Committee on Financial Services.

7195. A letter from the Director, Office of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Regulatory Capital Rules: Advanced Approaches Risk-Based Capital Rule, Revisions to the Definition of Eligible Guarantee (RIN: 3064-AE13) received August 19, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

7196. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education, transmitting the Department's final rule — Final priority. Rehabilitation Services Administration--Assistive Technology Alternative Financing Program [CFDA Number: 84.224D.] received August 19, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and Workforce.

7197. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Medical Devices; Technical Amendment [Docket No.: FDA-2014-N-0011] received September 2, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

7198. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Florida; Infrastructure Requirement (Visibility) for the 1997 and 2006 PM, and 2008 8-Hour Ozone NAAQS [EPA-R04-OAR-2012-0814 and EPA-R04-OAR-2012-0692; FRL-9915-65-Region 4] received August 20, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

7199. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — C.I. Pigment Red 112; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2013-0757; FRL-9914-14] received August 20, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

7200. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Alaska [EPA-R10-OAR-2011-0916; FRL-9916-14-Region 10] received September 3, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

7201. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Missouri, Control of Gasoline Reid Vapor Pressure [EPA-R07-OAR-2014-0595; FRL-9916-10-Region 7] received September 3, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

7202. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Texas; Revision to Control Volatile Organic Compound Emissions from Storage Tanks [EPA-R06-OAR-2012-0096; FRL-9916-32-Region 6] received September 3, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

7203. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of State Plans for Designated Facilities and Pollutants: New Hampshire; 111(d)/129 Revised State Plan for Large and Small Municipal Waste Combustors [EPA-R01-OAR-2012-0260; A-1-FRL-9915-71-Region 1] received September 3, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

7204. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Designation of Areas for Air Quality Planning Purposes; State of Arizona; Pinal County and Gila County; Pb [EPA-R09-OAR-2014-0266; FRL-9916-11-Region 9] received September 3, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

7205. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Flazasulfuron; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2013-0445; FRL-